

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 TOKYO 02761 011123Z

51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15

PRS-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 OC-06 CCO-00 USPS-02 AID-20

PM-07 NSC-10 SS-20 DOTE-00 INT-08 DRC-01 /143 W

----- 079565

R 010930Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 320

INFO COMUSJAPAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TOKYO 2761

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: LABOR'S SPRING OFFENSIVE - REPORT FIVE, FIRST STRIKE

REF: TOKYO 2378

SUMMARY: JAPANESE NATIONAL RAILROAD (JNR) UNIONS 24 HOUR STRIKE BEGAN AFTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOJ BROKE DOWN EVENING FEB 28. STRIKE IS POLITICAL IN NATURE AND THUS ILLEGAL ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN. RAIL TRANSPORT DISRUPTED BUT SO FAR PUBLIC WAGE ISSUE MAY BE DEFUSED WITH PROSPECTS IN THE OFFING OF HIGH INCREASES IN BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR. SO FAR NO RESOLUTION ON OTHER MAJOR ISSUES: (A) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOW-INCOME WORKERS AND THOSE ON WELFARE, (B) RIGHT TO STRIKE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS. END SUMMARY.

1. FIRST MAJOR EVENT OF 1974 SHUNTO (SPRING WAGE OFFENSIVE) JNR RAILROAD STRIKE CAME OFF ON SCHEDULE STOPPING MOST RAIL TRAFFIC ON HONSHU AND KYUSHYU MARCH 1. PRIVATE RAILROADS CONTINUED IN OPERATION, AND SPOT STRIKES BY POSTAL, TELECOMMUNICATION WORKERS AND A FEW RETAIL SHOPS IN TOKYO PROVIDED ONLY SYMBOLIC SUPPORT. PUBLIC APPEARED ACCEPTING WORK STOPPAGES AS INEVITABLE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TOKYO 02761 011123Z

RESULT OF DISCONTENT OVER INFLATION DESPITE GOJ REAFFIRMATION

THAT STRIKES WHICH WERE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED WERE ILLEGAL BY EITHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS. GOJ CHARGE THAT PRESENT STRIKES POLITICAL NOT ECONOMIC IN MOTIVATION IS SUPPORTED BY STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GOJ AND JNR UNIONS AND LABOR'S SPECIFIC DEMANDS FOR CALLING OFF STRIKE ACTION. ON FIRST COUNT, UNIONS HAVE JUST SUBMITTED THIS YEAR'S WAGE DEMANDS AND MET ONLY ONCE WITH JNR CORPORATION. THUS NO EXCUSE EXISTS THAT NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BROKEN DOWN REQUIRING STRIKE ACTION. ON SECOND COUNT, IN MEETINGS THURSDAY NIGHT BETWEEN GOJ CABINET OFFICERS AND TOP SOHYO AND CHURITSUOREN LEADERS (NOT JNR WORKERS' UNION CHIEFS), LABOR ANNOUNCED ITS PRICE FOR CALLING OFF THE STRIKE WAS (A) A THIRTY THOUSAND YEN INFLATION ALLOWANCE TO THOSE ON GOJ PENSIONS AND PUBLIC WELFARE ASSISTANCE, (B) TYING PENSION BENEFIT LEVELS TO COST OF LIVING INCREASES, AND (C) GRANTING STRIKE RIGHTS TO PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS. ALL THESE DEMANDS WOULD REQUIRE GOJ, NOT JUST JNR, ACTION.

2. GOJ REJECTED ALL DEMANDS AND NEGOTIATIONS ENDED 2345, FEBRUARY 28. THEY HAVE NOT RESUMED AND STRIKES WILL PROBABLY RUN FULL 24 HOUR COURSE. EVIDENTLY SOHYO'S OVER TWO MILLION DOLLAR PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN IS PAYING OFF. TWENTY THOUSAND PERSONS WERE RECRUITED EARLIER THIS WEEK TO DISTRIBUTE ANTI-INFLATION AND PRO-STRIKE PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS IN MAILBOXES, AND JAPANESE PUBLIC EITHER FOUND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ON PRIVATE LINES OR TOOK A THREE-DAY WEEKEND WITHOUT ANY OF THE RANCOR THAT TRIGGERED LAST YEAR'S RIOTS OVER RAIL SLOWDOWNS.

3. UNIONS IN PRIVATE INDUSTRY ALSO PROVIDED SYMBOLIC BUT NOT CRIPPLING STRIKES IN SUPPORT OF THE SPRING STRUGGLE CAMPAIGN. COAL MINERS (TANRO) STRUCK SEVENTEEN MINES, METAL AND ENGINEERING WORKERS (ZENKOKUKINZOKU) WENT OUT FOR TWELVE HOURS, AND THERE WERE OTHER TOKEN WORK STOPPAGES.

4. COMMENT: MINISTOR OF LABOR HASEGAWA MEETING WITH UNIONS LAST WEEK IMPLIED THAT LARGE WAGE INCREASES WERE FORTH-COMING IN BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS, AND THAT WAGES WERE, THEREFORE, NO LONGER AN AREA IN SERIOUS CONTENTION. (THIS APPEARS SUPPORTED BY OTHER EVIDENCE. THE SHIPBUILDING WORKERS' UNION DEMAND, WHICH, ALTHOUGH LOWER THAN DESIRED BY THE RANK-AND-FILE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 TOKYO 02761 011123Z

STILL TOTALED OVER 26 PERCENT, WAS REPORTEDLY SOLD TO MEMBERSHIP ON BASIS IT WOULD BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT MODIFICATION BY MANAGEMENT. UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS IN OTHER INDUSTRIES ARE SAID TO BE TAKING SHIPBUILDING WORKERS' DEMAND AS GUIDELINE FOR THIS YEAR'S SETTLEMENTS.)

5. IF WAGE ISSUE IS DEFUSED, TWO PRINCIPAL ISSUES REMAIN:
(A) LABOR'S DEMANDS FOR GOJ ACTION TO AID LOW-PAID, UNORGANIZED

WORKERS PLUS THOSE ON PUBLIC PENSIONS AND WELFARE, AND (B) STRIKE RIGHTS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR. ON FIRST ISSUE GOJ HAS OFFERED UP TO 2500 YEN AS A ONE-TIME INFLATION ALLOWANCE: BUT LABOR STILL DEMANDS THIRTY THOUSAND YEN. ON THE SECOND, NO SUBSTANTIVE CONCESSIONS HAVE BEEN PRESENTED, BUT LABOR HAS INDIRECTLY INDICATED IT MIGHT POSTPONE CONFRONTATION ON THIS ISSUE IF THE GOJ WILL MAKE CLEAR A CONSTRUCTIVE OFFER TO HELP THE LOW-PAID.

6. AS YET IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO PREDICT SERIOUSNESS OF SUBSEQUENTLY SCHEDULED STRIKES MARCH 26 AND DURING PERIOD APRIL 5-10. ONE JNR UNION ALREADY HAS INDICATED IT WOULD PREFER NOT TO STRIKE THEN, AND COOPERATION FROM THE FED OF PRIVATE RAILWAY WORKERS' UNIONS (SHITETSUSOREN) WILL DEPEND ON STATUS OF ITS OWN WAGE INCREASE NEGOTIATIONS. IF THE WAGE ISSUE APPEARS CLOSE TO SETTLEMENT WHEN NEXT ROUNDS OF SHUNTO STRIKES ARE SCHEDULED, UNION LEADERS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GENERATE SUPPORT TO KEEP PUSHING ON THOSE ABSTRACT DEMANDS. SHOESMITH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAGES, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR STRIKES, RAILROADS, LABOR ARBITRATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TOKYO02761
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740373/aaaacpxz.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TOKYO 2378
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 JUL 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR'S SPRING OFFENSIVE - REPORT FIVE, FIRST STRIKE
TAGS: ELAB, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005